

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 and 19-25, as amended, and new claim 29 appear in this application for the Examiner's review and consideration.

Claims 26-28 which were subject to restriction have been cancelled without prejudice to applicants' rights to file a divisional application for the subject matter of those claims.

The office action indicates that claims 18 and 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, the recitations of claim 18 have been added to claims 1, while claim 18 has been cancelled and the dependency of claim 19 amendment to claim 1. Also, new claim 29 is a rewritten version of the subject matter of claims 1, 18 and 19. It is respectfully submitted that these changes overcome all current rejections.

In connection with Applicants' corresponding PCT application, two additional prior art references, namely US patent 6,159,323 and PCT application WO02/084721, have been cited. Applicants and their attorneys have reviewed these references and found that they are not material to the patentability of the current claims. Accordingly, applicants have no basis to request the Examiner's review of these references so that it is respectfully requested that they simply be placed into the file of this application.

In view of the above, it is believed that claims 1-17, 19-25 and 29 are in condition for allowance, early notice of which would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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